

APPROVED 01/03/2006

The meeting came to order at 7:15 PM. Budget Committee members present were Charles Kimball, Kevin Zukas, Peg Pinkham, Joe Delahunty, Audrey Karamourtopoulos, Mark Wood, Mike Miller and Don Gates. Taking minutes was Selectmen's Clerk, Jeanne Nygren.

A question was asked about the new sign in front of school and how it was funded. Pinkham will check, she thinks it came from the building construction fund.

A motion by Delahunty to call the meeting to order. Karamourtopoulos seconded. All were in favor.

The Road Agent's budget was distributed and each member reviewed them. The Road Agent Guerwood Holmes came into the meeting at approximately 7:20 PM. The budget was reviewed by category code numbers.

001-Winter Salt-Kenniston Lane not ready yet and is not going to be taken over by the Town this year. The engineer recommended waiting until it was fully complete. Treaty Court has been requested for Town acceptance. Holmes has talked with the Town of Sandown about helping with this, or providing a price for them to take care of it. Delahunty asked if it was possible to swap road responsibilities. Holmes didn't think this move is viable as Delahunty suggested. Gates intervened and outlined that there is no even swap that could be done and this was not a big dollar number. Also Susan's Way is being requested to be taken over. Gristmill Phase is asking to be taken over but hasn't been approved yet.

002-Winter Sand-lower in this budget category because we still have a lot of sand on hand from last year.

003-Winter Equipment Hire-this figure is higher because we have new roads being taken on and proposed increase for contractors. The one-ton town owned truck is being used most of the time and Holmes truck isn't being used and is not registered this year. Delahunty asked why a \$20,000 increase when we own the truck. Holmes explained because we are taking on new roads. Holmes said eventually we may need another truck (6 wheeler). Delahunty stated that maybe if equipment was hired we should not have to pay for insurance and the maintenance on it. Would this be a better route to take because it seems increase is significant? What if you didn't contract someone direct Pinkham asked. Holmes said have three 6 wheelers now and could use another one. It is hard to be on a fixed budget because we don't know what we are going to spend and what will come for weather. Only figures for committee. Pinkham asked if the \$98,600. that has been spent so far includes the last 2 storms. Holmes said yes he thinks so. Figures are guesses because you don't know what is up coming.

Gates stated that you can't predict the weather or fuel costs. Also Holmes stated you don't know if the sander or a plow is going to break and need maintenance. We have 5 rented trucks with 5 people. Mostly one ton dump trucks. Gates asked Guerwood if he knew how many miles of road in Fremont now as compared to last year. Carlson will be asked to get this figure. A 2.50 to 5.00 raise for each contract truck is proposed. Their trucks only work for winter but have to be registered for the whole year. His brother and nephew both use their trucks. We are at a situation of about thinking about buying new 6 wheeler trucks for the town and coming soon could be the need for a brand new backhoe, trucks and building will be needed eventually because Holmes won't be able to

do this. He thinks in probably about 4 or 5 years left until this expense may be occurred. Do they need a full time road agent? Backhoe is his only income from the town and the town could really buy their own.

Kimball asked what other town's rates are. Holmes stated they are pretty close to Fremont. Gates stated that the \$116,500. figure is hard to project if it is an accurate figure because of all the factors that come into play..

005-Plow Sander maintenance repairs remained the same amount as last years \$5000.

006-Summer Equipment Hire was over \$10,000. The Tibbetts Road resurfacing project went way over on projected budget because of the condition of road with stumps when they got into the project and this cost was taken out of this category. Delahunty asked Holmes if there were any more dirt roads left in Fremont. A list of Old Ridge Road, Gates Lane, Kelly Lane were given by Holmes but he doesn't know if they want them hot topped.

007-Labor-full time laborer position is doing a great job. Budget increase includes his step increase and cost of living raise.

008-Labor-overtime-law states have to pay time and a half if he works over 40 hours. \$6000 covers his overtime.

009-Culverts-have to replace one on Poplin Drive because it is plugged and no water can get through. It is in back of post office and Pages house that has water back up into his yard. At first they couldn't find the culvert and when found it was 9 feet deep. The whole culvert has to be replaced. He tried to pump through but hasn't worked. Gates asked if this could be bored out. Holmes thinks it has to be dug up and the cost of the boring equipment is too high...

010-Cold Patch and Hot Patch-repair and patching.

011-Signs and Post-federal government want town to have new signs with lettering 9 inches high. Holmes doesn't want to do these signs until they have to do it.

012-Gravel stone loam-down \$2000.

013-Hand tools supplies down to \$150.

014- Power tools-this budget item stayed the same

017 Communications-new Nextel's are working fine cost stayed the same.

022 Painting lines-have to be contracted out, still looking for a contractor.

028 Roadside Mowing is done every other year. This year nothing has to be done.

035 Beaver control-only \$1000.because there hasn't been many problems.

075 Road agent salary-relatively the same salary.

076 Subdivision review is being done by Holmes at no charge to the town.

099 Training-cover workshops for full time employee. This figure stayed the same.

100 Maintenance building-nothing allowed because we don't have a building there.

101 Clerical- \$200.00-cost is down because town hall personnel do most of the work now.

105-Truck maintenance-covers oil changes and maintenance on trucks.

106 Truck fuels -these needs to be clarified \$5000.00 figure for 2006 but nothing in for 2005.

114 Road overlays- pave over existing road to make it smooth again. Brox Paving was given measurements and came up with a \$200,000 figure. Sandown Road, 2000 feet. South 2000 feet. North Road 2000. 1 ½" of hot top will be put over existing road. Cost would be approx. \$61,643.00. With hot top being \$48.75 a ton and the \$200,000.figure being so high, Holmes feels the route to go is with the \$61,643. figure to get the job done. Delahunty asked if Sandown road underneath in good shape. Holmes stated yes and that we need to do overlay instead of hot top to keep costs down. Gates think this is a good idea. Kimball asked why not do the whole road. Holmes stated road is in good shape in some spots.

Delahunty asked if a "No Through Trucking" sign could be used to keep some of the heavy traffic off these roads and limit to certain weight and restrictions. Karamourtopoulos asked if these vehicles should be responsible for damages.

Road agent can make a determination for "no through trucking" or limit on truck weight but is not easy to do according to Holmes. You have to post the weight of the truck or no trucks will be able to use the road. Holmes admitted that the more the town is growing the more the roads are taking a beating.

WA Snow Plow-take this figure out completely of the budget. They have a truck in the yard that is still operational and can be used.

Revenue in-Went through the income from builders on winter maintenance and the HW Block grant will be reduced by NH DOT this year.

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Gates stated that if we don't take care now we'll pay the price later.

Capital Reserve Fund -HW Building 15,000. Questions about whether there is a need to continue to put money in or do away with it, and when the time comes get a bond and build the building. Kimball wants to get a figure for construction of a building. Call General Steel give them the dimensions needed and they will give you a price. Karamourtopoulos asked if the \$45,000 already in fund could to be used to buy a truck. Holmes feels a price of around \$150,000 to build the building, and that he is waiting for someone to give him a price.

Delahunty thinks that being hit with a big warrant may not yield a positive vote and if we continue to put \$15,000. a year for the next 5 years combined with the banked \$45,000. to total \$120,000. that it would be a good chunk of the cost of a building and already be in the bank and more likely to

get a positive vote. Kimball also feels that town's people may look at this a little differently with some of the money available and that also at that time may need the vehicles to put into this building at an added cost in the warrant.

An example of in Brentwood a committee of five people figured out what town needed and they borrowed 5 million and they now have what they need.

HW Equipment-leave as is.

Holmes left the meeting at 9:15 PM and was thanked by the committee for his input.

Wood asked to get back on track and start to wrap things up. With taking out plow \$8,000. and a budget spreadsheet error, the 2006 budget is only up approximately 10,000 more than last year. Less than a 5% difference since last year isn't bad with increase in roads and increase in.

The Committee will go over the minutes of December 12, 2005 at the next meeting.

Pinkham asked that in behalf of School Board and Administration that the Budget Committee be better prepared if they are to come next week. They felt that some occurrences were very disrespectful to the Board and Administration as when people arrive late and expect to be filled in on what they missed and questions are not on target to the issues that are at hand. The material that was to be gone over was not pre-read by some members. At the next meeting on January 3rd the budget committee needs to be ready. Pinkham doesn't feel budget committee is ready for this meeting. Administration doesn't feel that with a budget this size to have multiple questions on line items. Budget Committee was asked if they wanted to go over line item by line item or by major increases. The discussion that night was only on the major changes and went off the beaten path of the discussion at hand several times. A lot of questions were about states rules and the definition of mandate was one of the issues.

Committee discussed issues with Pinkham and agree they need to formulate their list of questions and discussions of what they want to ask the School Board and Administration.

Pinkham made a motion and Kimball seconded for the Budget Committee to meet Jan 3rd and not have the school committee and administration present.

Miller asked what is the job of the Budget Committee? They are to present to our community whether the budget is correct and asked for appropriate and cost effective. None of us are experts. The committee needs to rely on the people who are the experts and the administration is well paid and professionals whose job is to come to this committee and need to have questions asked that this budget committee needs to present to the town. Don't think this process is any different from others.

Karamourtopoulos stated that like tonight's meeting the town's budget was presented that night and gone over with no preparation necessary. Why is the school budget so different? They should be with us during the process when we reviewed the budget especially the school budget. This budget is hard to understand and can be confusing when you only look at increases. Perhaps doing line by line would be better and can find cost saving items while understanding and getting educated.

Gates feels we all should review the budget and then has discussions before going through line by line items.

Miller said that the school budget is so complex so why our process should be any less detailed. Delahunty suggested we go over the budget by line item and formulate our questions.

Pinkham stated there is a need to set a time frame and not get off tract. It is great to get other peoples opinions. The committee is here to discuss the budget not administrative duties.

Miller said that the Budget Committee recommended for a position, and the School Board made recommendations for this position and they questioned why? Pinkham said that the Board looked at level of education. The School Board feels that we hire administrators and oversee what they are doing; they make recommendation for what they need. Sometimes we get off base and micromanaging. In the past we have not gone line by line.

Delahunty suggested looking at bottom line and give 3 %. Several years ago, Thom Roy had said that the Budget Committee should to go through line item by line item. The Budget Committee can't just cut a percentage by law. They need to make specific line item dollar figure recommendations.

Much of the time the Budget Committee and School Board have differences. Prepare to go through this process with mutual discussion on how we are going to approach this. Wood said it won't harm things if we get together on the 3rd and compile a list of questions. Gates suggested going over the budget as Committee. Time frames for the meeting were discussed as well.

Kimball said every one has agreed to meet on the 3rd as a Budget Committee; and perhaps bring everyone back for another meeting. It is possible that Tuesday January 10th won't be a good night for that as there is a scheduled School Board meeting that night. Pinkham will get back with a date.

A motion to adjourn meeting was made by Pinkham at 9:50 pm. Motion was seconded by Wood. All members concurred.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Nygren